

RUSSIAN TORTOISE

(*Testudo horsfieldii*)

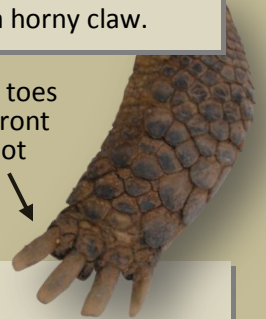
NONNATIVE



Description: Small tortoise (up to 8 inches long) with a round semi-flat carapace. Color is light brown to yellow with dark brown around each scute. Legs and head are yellow-brown and jaws are dark brown. Front legs have 5 to 6 rows of overlapping scales with four claws on each foot; the tail ends in a horny claw.

Habitat: Terrestrial; native to eastern Europe and the Middle East, where it lives in dry sandy areas such as rocky deserts and hillsides. Depending on temperature, it will hibernate in winter.

Four toes
on front
foot



Behavior: Herbivorous; diet consists of grasses, flowers, leaves and fruits, from which they also get a majority of their water. Remain in burrows or rock outcroppings in the heat of the day and at night.

If you find one: If you find a Russian tortoise, it is a captive turtle that has either escaped or has been unlawfully released. For the benefit of the animal, please contact the [nearest Game and Fish office](#) or the Phoenix Herpetological Society for information and recommendations.